

bastard-trenching are all for the purpose of disintegration. But we also know that it is necessary to fork and hoe the surface after crops begin to grow on it, because hoeing keeps down weeds, allows light, air and rain to enter easily and helps to warm the surface, prevents evaporation and so benefits the tiny rootlets just beneath.

Soil is an anchorage for the plants we desire to grow there. The roots of tiny plants and giant trees alike are held fast, and find beneath the surface a vast storehouse of foods necessary for their individual needs. So we see there is much more in soil than is at first apparent, and to produce healthy plants we must see to it that any food constituents missing, or taken away, are replaced before the next crop is planted.

From what has been written readers may assume that manure or some kind of plant food is essential to growth. Such is not by any means the case. All good garden soil is capable of producing fairly average crops over a number of years without any form of fertiliser or manure, by the simple process of rotational cropping coupled with energetic tillage and the keeping down of noxious weeds that sap the food constituents needed by plants.

Rotational cropping has been practised by agriculturists throughout the ages, more or less intelligently, with results that certainly seemed to justify the practice. In modern garden practice we usually divide the plot into three parts, and arrange for a three-years' rotation, making sure, as far as practicable, that the same crop does not occupy the same position two years successively. By this means each succeeding crop taps a source of food supply left untouched by the previous one.

Deep digging, proper manuring and liming, plus rotational cropping, help us to get the best out of the soil.

A WONDERFUL WEED-KILLER

In a recent JOURNAL article reference was made to a substance called sodium chlorate, or to give it a more simple designation chlorate of soda.

Readers have taken such a great interest in the matter that we felt it our duty to make a few more enquiries about it.

Our statement that a highly inflammable gas is given off when it dries on clothing is not, it appears, quite correct.

The fact is that when chlorate solutions are allowed to dry on clothing, the chlorate is deposited in a fine state of division, and is very susceptible to mechanical friction.

Such friction may easily cause decomposition of the chlorate, and as the resultant liberated oxygen is a very active supporter of combustion, it would make the articles on which it is deposited more inflammable than they otherwise would be.

There are many proprietary brands of weed-killer on the market. Arsenical ones are effective, but in some cases dangerous.

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